

and false statements in any matter involving a contract.

We need strong disincentives for those who defraud taxpayers. These controls must be in place now because criminal statutes cannot be applied retroactively. We cannot in good faith ask American families to sacrifice for postwar reconstruction and then allow so many others to unfairly profit at their expense.

Mr. Speaker, we must send a clear message that cheating U.S. taxpayers is completely unacceptable and will not go unpunished. For these reasons, I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the War Profiteering Prevention Act of 2003.

RECOGNIZING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF DR. ROBERT PAVLICA

HON. NITA M. LOWEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 8, 2003

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the great contributions to education made by Dr. Robert Pavlica. I also wish to congratulate him on being one of only six teachers from around the world, and one of only two from the United States, to be honored by INTEL. Innovation in Education with the prestigious 2003 "Excellence in Teaching Award." He received this accolade for his pioneering development of the "Authentic Science Research in the High School" program.

Dr. Pavlica, a White Plains, NY, resident, who has a Ph.D. in biochemistry, along with master's degrees in philosophy, cell biology, and biology, has been inspiring students as a science teacher at Byram Hills High School in Armonk, NY, for the past 33 years. In 1990, he began teaching scientific research after one of his students asked for his help in pursuing an independent research project.

This would lead Dr. Pavlica to create the "Authentic Science Research in the High School" program, a three-year science research course, in which sophomores, who elect to participate, are instructed in the methods and processes of research. This culminates in each student conducting an original research project into an area of particular interest to the student. To help guide his or her work, each student is mentored by a respected scientist in the student's field of research.

This program has been enormously successful. Since its creation little more than a decade ago, thirty-nine of Dr. Pavlica's students at Byram Hills have become semifinalists for the Intel Science Talent Research Award, formerly known as the Westinghouse. Amazingly, eleven of his students have even reached the finals of the esteemed competition. This program has also prepared many more students for the arduous research that they will face in college.

Dr. Pavlica has taught his techniques to numerous educators, who wish to replicate his success in getting students excited about scientific research. Presently, over 170 school districts throughout the country have instructors who are using his program. In fact, over seventy percent of public and private high schools in Westchester County, NY, now employ the program.

The success of the program at Byram Hills has been mirrored in these schools, as well. Indeed, in 2002 and 2003, roughly forty percent of all of New York State's INTEL Science Talent Search semifinalist awards went to students who were taught using the "Authentic Science Research in the High School" program.

I am truly honored that I have this opportunity to congratulate Dr. Pavlica on his well-deserved award and to thank him for helping so many students in Westchester and around the country learn more about science and the potential that lies within them.

PROTECTING PUBLIC SAFETY IS AT THE HEART OF GUN PURCHASE BACKGROUND RECORDS

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 8, 2003

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I want to provide some additional information to follow up on my RECORD statement of November 25 regarding the provision in the FY 2004 omnibus spending bill which would require the destruction of background records checks 24 hours after a gun purchase.

I submit for the RECORD letters from two law enforcement officers groups who share my deep concerns about the impact on public safety of changing the current 90-day period for retaining data related to firearms purchase and approval. The Federal Bureau of Investigation Agents Association, wrote: "The more the retention period is reduced, the more difficult it would become to use the paperwork to investigate or prosecute crimes related to the use of sales of the firearms in question. Any such efforts can only complicate the already difficult task of law enforcement and jeopardize public safety."

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION,
AGENTS ASSOCIATION,

November 25, 2003.

Re Issues Related to Retention of Firearms Paperwork.

Hon. FRANK WOLF,
Chairman, Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, State, and Judiciary Appropriations Committee, H-309 Capitol Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN WOLF: On behalf of the FBI Agents Association (FBIAA), I am writing to express the FBIAA's concerns regarding the possibility of an appropriations rider that might reduce the current 90-day retention period for data related to firearms sales and approval. The FBIAA is a non-governmental professional association with a membership of nearly 9,000 current and more than 2,000 retired FBI agents nationwide; neither the FBIAA nor I speak for the official FBI.

While the FBIAA certainly understands and appreciates the civil liberties concerns related to firearms registration and the retention of paperwork related to background checks, we think the current 90-day retention period strikes the proper balance between civil liberties and crime control. To date, we are not aware of any problems associated with the current system. The more the retention period is reduced, the more difficult it would become to use the paperwork to investigate or prosecute crimes related to the use or sales of the firearms in question. Any such efforts can only complicate the already difficult task of law enforcement and jeopardize public safety.

We would be happy to further communicate with you on this or any other issue. As Congress moves forward in the appropriations process, we ask that you thoroughly review any rider attempt that may limit the ability of law enforcement officers to perform effective, fair, and timely investigations.

Very truly yours,

FRED BRAGG, *President.*

The International Association of Chiefs of Police, which first raised concerns about changing the time background records are maintained in a letter in 2001, continues to stand by that statement, which said: "We believe that decreasing the amount of time the purchase records are kept will weaken the background check system and allow more criminals to illegally obtain weapons."

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
CHIEFS OF POLICE,

Alexandria, VA, September 4, 2001.

Mr. TIMOTHY MUNSON,
Section Chief, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Module A-3, Clarksburg, WV.

DEAR MR. MUNSON: The International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the proposed rule that would reduce the amount of time that the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) maintains National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS) records on approved purchases from 90 days to one business day. The IACP is world's oldest and largest association of law enforcement executives with more than 18,000 members in 100 countries.

The IACP believes that the 90-day retention period should not be shortened. Decreasing the retention period of these records to one business day will not provide law enforcement with sufficient time to perform the necessary audits on the NICS system as established by the Brady Act.

In March 1999, the Department of Justice issued a proposed rule to reduce the retention period from 180 days to 90 days. They concluded that 90 days was the "shortest practicable period of time for retaining records of allowed transfers that would permit the performance of basic security audits" of the NICS system. However, the Justice Department also acknowledged that law enforcement and the FBI's Advisory Policy Board had instead sought to increase the record retention period from 180 days to one year.

The FBI has stated that it requires at least 90 days to audit the records in order to ensure the accuracy and legitimacy of background checks performed by federally-licensed firearms dealers. These audits allow the FBI to search for patterns of fraud and abuse by both gun dealers and purchasers. Through these audits, the FBI can identify instances in which the NICS system is used for unauthorized purchases such as gun dealers having background checks on people other than gun buyers. In addition, audits can also help determine if gun buyers have submitted false identification in order to thwart the background check system. To run these crucial audits, the FBI needs the records on both approved and denied purchases. If these records are quickly destroyed, it will be much more difficult for law enforcement to investigate and prevent abuses of the background check system.

We believe that decreasing the amount of time the purchase records are kept will weaken the background check system and allow more criminals to illegally obtain weapons. In addition, it is important to note that there have been no allegations that any information retained in the records has been misused.